Oakley Union UMC
Safe Sanctuaries Policy

These policies and procedures shall serve as standards for the Oakley Union UMC located at W2388 Gerber Road, Juda, WI. To be used at all youth and children events at the Church. If childcare is provided as part of any church sponsored event, all childcare providers will conform to these policies as well.

Definitions

Youth: Any person age 12 – 17 or any person 18 who is still in high school
Adult: Any person over age 18 unless still in high school
Child: Any person under age 12
Church: Oakley Union United Methodist Church, Juda, Wisconsin
Event: A Church or ministry sponsored activity or trip that involves youth gathering
Staff: Any paid employee of the Church
Chaperon: An adult who provides direct supervision of youth. This person must be able to take responsibility for a group of youth– giving direction, setting boundaries, disciplining appropriately, maintaining safety, etc.
Participant: A youth who is registered, enrolled, attending or otherwise engaging in an event or activity sponsored by the Church or its ministries
Volunteer: Any unpaid adult

Procedures

Selection and Screening of Adults

Background Checks: Prior to beginning service, each prospective staff or volunteer must unconditionally agree to a criminal background check. The Church secretary will facilitate a national criminal background check which will be repeated annually and will maintain the legally required records.

The Church will incur the cost or the background check.

Five Year Rule: To be a Chaperon, an adult must be at least five years older than the oldest youth they will supervise. No one under the age of 18 will be given supervisory responsibility for a group of youth.

Operational Procedures

Open Door Rule: All Church and ministry activities with youth shall be held in open areas or rooms with windows in the doors. Where this is not possible,

doors will be left open. No adult will be alone with a youth of any gender behind closed doors for any reason.

Two Chaperon Rule: There will be a minimum of two Chaperons present at every youth event or program. One adult will not be alone with one youth. For small group activities in which one adult supervises each group, groups are to meet in open areas, ideally in sight/sound range of another group. At no time will a youth be left unsupervised.

Traveling: It is ideal to have a minimum of two Chaperons when traveling. It is acceptable to travel with one Chaperon if other accountable Chairpersons will be joining the group at their location. At no time should one adult be alone in a vehicle with one youth, unless that adult/youth are parent/child. Youth shall not be drivers for any party of an event or program, even if they are driving only themselves or their own vehicles.

Sleeping Arrangements: Adults shall not sleep in the same rooms as youth. Exceptions will be considered in the case of bunkhouse or similar style lodging facilities in which there are more than four people to a room or if the adult is the parent of all the youth within the room. Adults shall not share a bed with a youth even if the adult is that youth's parent.

Bathroom Facilities: Adults and youth may use the same bathroom facilities. Adults will not shower at the same time as youth, unless each shower is fully contained and separated by full length walls/doors.

Social Media: Any social media group set up in the name of the Church, its ministries or events shall have at least two adult administrators. Social media communication, texting, or other electronic communication between adults and youth should be confined to public posts or copied to another adult leader and/or the participants parent after the fact. Adults will not post photos or personal information regarding youth participants to whom they are not related on a personal social media page or website, even with permission.

Reporting Suspected Incidents

Mandated Reporting: In Wisconsin, any person who thinks child abuse and/or neglect has happened or might happen can make a report to Child Protective Services or law enforcement. It is enough to have "reasonable cause" to suspect

child abuse. CPS and not any Church staff will determine if the information given by the reporter meets the legal requirements to initiate an investigation.

Procedure for Reporting Child Abuse: If a volunteer or staff person suspects child abuse, whether committed by another volunteer or staff person or by someone else in the Child's life, he/she must report that suspicion immediately to his/her supervisor or the person in charge of the event. The supervisor will assist the volunteer or staff to make a report to Child Protective Services. Contact information can be found at the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families website: **https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/reportabuse.**
Reporting Policy Violations: If you witness a violation of this policy, please report it to the person in charge of the event or director.

Honest and good faith complaints are welcomed. The Church, including the aforementioned persons, will not retaliate against any person who brings forward a complaint. Prompt and appropriate investigation and corrective action will be taken.

After Care: Following any report of incident within a church or ministry event, the person in charge of the event shall work with the conference staff, the District Superintendent, and/or the local church to provide ongoing support and care for all involved.

Media Inquiries
Should a staff member or volunteer of any Church or ministry event be contacted by the media for comment on any alleged violation of this policy involving the Church or The United Methodist Church, that staff member or volunteer should direct the media person to the Pastor or the District Superintendent. No other staff member or volunteer is authorized to speak on behalf of the Church.